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## POSSESSING ONE'S SOUL.

By MRS LYNN LINTON.

THERE is a patience that is servile and a patience that is noble—a submission to injustice that takes the pith out of a man, and a recognition of superior force which shows his clearness of vision for the one part and his strength of self-control for the other. The slave exemplifies the first—the philosopher the last; and between slavishness and self-control there can be no hesitation which to honour. In all the untoward circumstances of life there is but one of two ways—to break or bear—to fight with might and main and do all that is possible to overcome the enemy and attain freedom from distress—or to bear the inevitable with dignity—to yield to the unconquerable with that noble self-possession which makes defeat itself as grand as victory. Wrench the dagger from your assailant's hand and turn it against himself if needs must; but if you are worsted in the struggle, and wounded, cover yourself decently in your cloak and bear your secret without vain regrets or screeching lamentations—accepting your fate with that patience which in the Christian is resignation to the will of God, in the philosopher is recognition of the inevitable.

Every man worthy of the name of man should know how to possess his soul—bearing with patience those things which energy cannot change and the evil of which impatience only increases. Nothing is more pitiable than to hear of the childish irritability of men of light and leading, the grandeur of whose intellect is dwarfed by the smallness of their moral control—whose leadership of other men's thoughts does not include the possession of their own souls. The frantic lamentations because of the untimely crowing of the challenging cocks—the furious onslaughts against the inevitable noises of the streets and the as inevitable noises of the railway—the inability among them to bear, to endure, to resist depressing influences by the grand power

of patience—this it is which gives cause to the enemy to blaspheme and makes the Philistine's contempt for intellect only too intelligible. It is, of course, a mistake to suppose that intellect should necessarily mean possession of the soul as well as the nimble or the profound use of the brain. But it is a natural mistake, and can plead a certain amount of moral harmony in its favour. This patient possession of one's own soul stretches far and wide; it covers all the domain of social life—all the tract of inter-relation with others. It means patience with every kind of outside annoyance that cannot be removed by vigorous exertion. It does not mean patience with removable nuisances, or curable evils which want a big broom and a strong hand to make a clean sweep of them before the sun goes down. But there are both nuisances and evils which cannot be swept away in this high-handed fashion, which can only be removed by patient endeavour and unwearied repetition; and then the possession of the soul comes in as a faculty akin to the grand creative and transforming powers of Nature—working bit by bit and inch by inch silently, patiently, 'without haste or rest.'

Take as an example the ignorance of children, and of the untrained and uneducated generally. Which is best here—the nervous irritability which 'flies' when the eyes, as yet unopened, do not see, and the feet, as yet unaccustomed to the right way, stray into the wrong—or the self-possession of patience which gently, firmly, unweariedly repeats and repeats again the lesson which has to be taught before it is learnt, and learnt before it is practised? How many a childish life has been made miserable and all the mature future darkened and distorted by the brutality, the impatience of those who acted as if knowledge came by intuition, and the gradual evolution of the moral sense, as well as the gradual development of the intellectual faculties, was but a fond fable devised to excuse the wilfulness of negligence! To these impatient souls the young and ignorant should make but one bound from darkness to light. No faltering steps of stumbling

advance, now halting, now retreating, but in the main going forward for them, these irritable souls—these impatient tempers. No unwearied repetition day after day of the same precept, till the dull brain and clumsy hand have finally been impressed and directed. They do not possess themselves. Their impatience, their nerves, their irritability possess them instead; and when they are angry they blame the stupidity of those they instruct, and not their own want of self-possession—the ineptitude to learn of the learner, and not the unfitness of the teacher to teach.

This same quality of patience, which is but another word for the possession of one's own soul, is of primal importance in all one's dealings with the young and ignorant. We make the mistake, in general, of judging both the inexperience of youth and the mistakes of ignorance from our own platform of experience and better knowledge. We have to be patient with the follies, the very virtues of youth, always striving to straighten the crooked path and to substitute good grain for those wild-oats. If we do really possess our own soul we shall be able to look all round the thing we deplore; and, looking all round to find reasons why; and, in finding reasons why, to see also excuses, and therefore softening of judgment. For things are not absolute but relative to the condition of those who do them; and the child of two years old who surreptitiously takes a bit of sugar is not on the same plane as the accomplished penman who deliberately forges his friend's name to a bank bill. Yet each action is a theft; and the respective magnitude of each issue does not modify the wrong. It is in the ignorance of the one and the knowledge of the other where the real guilt lies. And this holds good for all the indiscretions and follies of youth—in due proportion of patience with ignorance—possessing one's own soul while seeking to enlighten and direct that of another. If parents and masters—and above all mistresses—would but remember this, how vastly lessened would be that river of tears which humanity sheds daily for sorrows that are remediable and anguish that need never have been! How that cloud of sighs going up to heaven would be lightened—how those prayers of futile misery, 'How long, O Lord, how long?' would be reduced—translated instead into glad and humble little *Te Deums*! It is one of the saddest of all sad thoughts to remember how much we suffer unnecessarily in a life where we need not suffer by the inevitable—how much we are afflicted by each other in the tyranny, the oppression, the injustice, the impatience that need not be, and would not be did we but possess our own souls!

Good breeding teaches us the outward semblance of this possession, and to bear complacently with bores is the practical outcome of the lesson. People who interrupt you while you are talking, and will not let you finish your sentence in their impatience to contradict you—to cap your story with a personal experience of their own—to break off the conversation and lead it into another channel—people who take the words out of your mouth and supply the adjective or noun, as if you had aphasia and they the gift of divination—people who tell you for the tenth time the same old anecdote, the same old adventure, or

who repeat the same complaint and the same confidence—people who have panaceas and can settle the Irish difficulty and the Bulgarian question—who could discover Jack the Ripper as easily as a cat could find a mouse, if only they had a free hand and the police at their command—people who, whatever the topic of conversation, lead it round to themselves, and make the general theme a personal one and the discussion of first principles a peg for their rampant egotism—people who contradict you for the sake of contradiction, and people who agree with all you say, knowing nothing of the merits of the matter, but backing you up vigorously notwithstanding—all these and more of the same breed politeness demands that you should entertain with patience; and the possession of your soul in a drawing-room is one of the first things required. We have indeed to possess our souls in all sorts of social coils and knots. When some of our guests are late and ill-humour is beginning to hover over the others—when the dinner is bad and the cooking-butter has been rancid—when the companion to whom we are assigned is stupid or cross-cornered—when we are not included in a coveted invitation—when we are asked to a disagreeable house and for politic reasons cannot refuse—when a favourite friend marries an unsympathetic acquaintance and we are snubbed where formerly we were caressed—when the Hanging Committee rejects our picture, the press cuts up our book, the 'boss' editor rejects our article, and the actors gag, misinterpret, and forget—then we have to possess our souls in patience and to refrain from letting fly. When graver catastrophes happen there is no more use in shrieking out our woes to men and the winds than there is in flounce and fury over the smaller annoyances. Shrieks, flounce, fury, despair—nothing of all this helps. The only help there is to be found is in tiding over the bad moment with patience and building up a something out of the wreck. If we cannot build up a mansion we may have a cottage, and if not a cottage then at least a screen between ourselves and the blasting wind. Out of all wreck and ruin that something is left, and we can make it available if we have the mind.

We must possess our souls in pain. Impatience makes those pangs sharper and more severe. Hysterics of all kinds, indeed, make all pains more severe; and to lose our self-control is to open the flood-gates and let the whole country go to waste. In the petty vexations of domestic life, as in the large disappointments which sadden and impoverish our after-years, it is needful to 'hold on to ourselves'—to possess our souls—to have patience—to accept the inevitable with serenity and dignified reservation of force. It is all in the day's work—all in the training of life—and he who learns his lesson best has most of this noble self-respect, which forbears to howl, to whine, to rage, to bluster, to complain, to resist where resistance is in vain. The tumultuous grievances which the screeching race of sufferers pour out in floods of mingled tears and wrath, lose their pathos by the process. Those who pity themselves so profoundly get few to echo their threnodies. Those who do not possess their own souls are not apt to stir the souls of others. If, indeed, we want to be masters of others, we must first be masters of ourselves,

and in this art of self-mastery patience comes first—that patience which is but the sweeter term for the old Stoics' more manly severity of self-discipline and self-control.

## MY SHIPMATE LOUISE.

THE ROMANCE OF A WRECK.

By W. CLARK RUSSELL,

Author of the *Wreck of the Grosvenor*, etc.

### CHAPTER XL.—THE ISLAND.

THE MEN now went to work to get tackles on to the yards, in order to hoist the long-boat over. When they had her alongside, they passed water and provisions and several gallons of rum into her, with other matters of this sort, of which I hardly took notice. They also handed down the shovels used for the little stock of coal that was carried in the fore-peak, and several crows, hand-spikes, and whatever else they could lay their hands upon that would enable many of them at a time to dig up the soil.

Whilst all this was doing, I remained seated on the poop with Miss Temple. I was now feeling better and stronger again, could think rationally, and astonishment was worn out.

'It is most unmistakably the island that Captain Braine named,' I said to the girl, speaking with my eye at the telescope. 'I remember he spoke of a clump of trees at the foot of which the treasure lies hidden. Yonder are several clumps. Which one of them will it be, I wonder? and will the money be there? What an astonishing romance will it prove, should those sailors fall in with a booty of nearly two hundred thousand pounds!'

'What are they going to do, do you think, Mr Dugdale? Are they not taking a deal of provisions with them?'

'They may mean to make merry. After months of shipboard life, the touch of the land will feel grateful to the soles of their feet. Let them find the gold! their transports will know no bounds; there will be some wild skylarking amongst them before they come off, or I am greatly mistaken. I wish they would make themselves drunk, that I might run away with the ship.'

'Cannot that be done when they are on shore?' she cried with an air of exultant entreaty in her sudden leaning towards me as she spoke.

'Yes; were an off-shore gale to come on to blow, I might contrive to slip and let the barque storm out to sea before it. But in this weather! They would be after me in a jiffy in their boat, and then God help me when they got hold of me!'

A shade of paleness overspread her face, and she regarded me with a look of consternation, as though violently affected by the fancies my simple sentence had put before her. I sprang on top of the hencoop to sweep the sea-line with the telescope, but could nowhere discern the least shadow of land. As I put down the glass, the carpenter came off the quarter-deck, where, at the gangway, he had been busily shouting out instructions and overseeing the work of preparing the boat, and approached me. He held Captain Braine's parchment chart, at which he stopped to look for a moment when he was yet some paces distant.

'Will ye tell me what's your opinion of the weather, sir?' he exclaimed, in a voice whose natural gruffness and surliness were not to be sweetened by the satisfaction that was merely visible in a small symptom of respectfulness in his bearing.

'I do not know, I am sure. This cloudless sky should be full of promise. The mercury in the captain's cabin promises fair weather.'

'What do 'ee think of letting them sails hang?' said he, sending his malevolent gaze aloft; 'or shall we tarn to and roll 'em up afore we go ashore?—though it'll be a long job,' he added, directing his eyes thirstily at the island.

'The ship is in your hands,' said I.

'Oh well,' he exclaimed, as though gratified by my admission, and sending a slow look round the sea; 'we'll let 'em be as they are for the present. The anchor's got a good grip, I allow; if so be as a breeze should come along, we can send some of the men aboard to furl the sails.'

'We! thought I, as I regarded him in silence.

'My sight ain't what it used to be,' he continued; 'yet I can see enough of that there island'—and here he began to fumble with the chart he held—'to guess that this here's a first-rate likeness of it.—This,' said he, pointing with his square thumb at the mark in the middle of the lagoon on the parchment, 'is one of the bearings we've got to have in mind to find out where we're to begin to dig, ain't it?'

'I believe so,' said I.

'Didn't ye put down the particulars of the spot in writing?' he inquired, looking up at me from the chart.

'No,' I answered shortly.

'How many feet was the money hid away from the wash of the water?' he demanded.

'It was in paces, I remember,' I returned, 'but the figure is entirely gone out of my head. Wilkins should be able to recollect.'

He ran with a sort of dismay to the break of the poop and bawled for Wilkins. The lad came half-way up the steps. The carpenter spoke to him, and then returned.

'The young scowbanker don't recall,' he exclaimed. 'He believes—a curse on his believes!—that the captain spoke of four hundred feet.—Was that it, sir?'

'I remember enough to make sure that it was not four hundred feet,' I answered.

He picked up the glass and levelled it at the island.

'Which of them clumps of trees was it that the capt'n talked to ye about?' he asked whilst he looked.

'He did not describe any particular clump. It was to be found by measuring so many paces from the edge of the water of the lagoon yonder, the pillar bearing something west, but what I can't tell you. I treated the story as a madman's dream, and dismissed all the particulars of it from my mind.'

'We'll have to try all them clumps, then, that's all,' said he, with a hard face, and a voice at once sharp and coarse with ill-subdued temper. 'We'll get the money, though it comes to having to dig up the whole island.—And now, sir, there's nothen to stop us—the boat's ready—if you'll be pleased to come along.'

'I can be of no good to you,' I exclaimed with

an involuntary recoil; 'you have hands enough to dig. I'll stop here.'

'No, if you please; we shall want you,' he said, with a stare of dogged determination.

'I must not be left alone, Mr Lush,' cried Miss Temple, with a painful expression of fear in her bloodless face. 'If Mr Dugdale goes, I must accompany him.'

'No, mem. You're safe enough here. We must have Mr Dugdale along with us to show us what to do.—No arguments, sir! The impatience of the men 'll be forcing them to taking you up in their arms and lifting you over the side, if you keep 'em waiting.'

'But am I to understand,' I exclaimed, 'that all hands of you intend to quit the ship, leaving this lady alone on board?'

'Joe Wetherly and Jim Simpson 'll remain,' he replied; 'they'll keep a lookout, and two's enough with us men in hail of their voices.—Now, sir, if you please.'

The crew standing in the gangway were looking my way with signs of irritation in their bearing. I merely needed to give one glance at the carpenter's face to satisfy me that temper, protest, appeal, would be hopeless; that refusal must simply end in my being bodily laid hold of. I was urged by every instinct in me to a policy of conciliation. To irritate the fellows would be the height of folly; to provoke the indignity of being seized and roughly thrust into the boat, the utmost degree of madness. My resolution was at once formed.

'I will accompany you, Mr Lush,' I said. 'Get you gone on to the quarter-deck whilst I say a few words to comfort my companion.'

He walked away to the gesture with which I accompanied this request.

'Miss Temple, pray take heart. Wetherly is one of the two men who are to be left. You will feel safe here with him on board until I return.'

'Until you return!' she cried, with her eyes full of misery and horror. 'I shall never see you more!'

'Oh no; do not believe such a thing. The men imagine I shall be of service to them in lighting upon the spot where the gold is. They cannot do without me as a navigator. They will bring me off with them when they leave the island.'

'I shall never see you again,' she repeated in a voice of exquisite distress. 'Why could they not have left us together here?'

'Now, Mr Dugdale, if you please,' bawled the carpenter from the head of the poop ladder.

I took and pressed her hand between mine, and then broke away from her. What had I to say, what to offer, that she could convert into a hope? I turned to smile and to wave my hand, and found her with her back upon me and her face buried.

Wetherly and the man who was to be left with him stood a little forward of the main-hatch looking on. As I stepped to the gangway I called out: 'Wetherly, and you, Simpson: I leave the lady behind me; she is alone. You will see to her, men, I beg.'

Simpson gazed stolidly, as though not understanding me. Wetherly smiled, and flourished his hand with a significant glance.

When the men had entered the boat, there were

ten of us in all. She was a roomy, stoutly-built fabric, and her oars were almost as long as sweeps. The barque's quarter-boats would have been too small for this service; for the ten of us made a body, and they had handsomely stowed her besides with water and rum and provisions (as you are aware), not to mention the sundries with which they proposed to dig the soil. I rather wondered that they should have supplied themselves so hospitably, till I recollected that Captain Braine had said there was no fresh water and nothing to eat upon the island. The carpenter had no doubt remembered this as a passage in the story which Wilkins had overheard and repeated.

When we were clear of the shadow of the barque's side, I turned to look for Miss Temple, and observed her seated in a posture of utter despondency upon the skylight. I stood up and flourished my hat; but she made no sort of response. She remained motionless, as though stupefied and insensible. I resumed my seat, breathing hard with the wild mood that possessed me; but I was not to be suffered to sit in silence. The carpenter plied me with questions, which he only ceased that the others might have a chance of making inquiries. Couldn't I remember how many paces it was that the captain had said? Would it be one hundred? Would it be two hundred? Would I turn to and think a bit? A gent's eddicated memory was always better than plain men's, who weren't no scholars. If the right number of paces wasn't hit upon, it might take 'em a week to find the spot. And what about the bearings? Couldn't I recollect exactly how the trees bore from that there pillar? Wherever the gold was, it couldn't lay deep hid, for there was but two men to bury it, and them weak with shipwreck, and they wasn't going all the way down to hell to make sartin of a secret nook.

To all this I had to listen and reply as I best could. Yet it was talk to put a fancy that had long haunted me—that had haunted me, I may say, from the time of some of my earliest conversations with the carpenter—into shape, out of which arose one instantly present keen perception: that gold or no gold, they must be kept hunting for it!

It was a cloudless day; the sky a true Pacific blue, a mild breathing of wind off the island; and the sun, that was already at his meridian, flung a wide splendour upon the air that was without an insufferable excess of heat. The long-boat floated into the lagoon, the bottom of which showed like a pavement of white marble trembling through the blue, glass-like translucency. I looked carefully about me, but could see no signs of the hut which Captain Braine told me he had built, and out of which he had crawled to find the Yankee surveying craft hove-to abreast of the island. Neither were there any other relics of his shipwreck visible: such as the bottles, casks, tins, and so on, which, according to his account, he and his companion had landed from the brigantine.

'The Spanish craft 'll have come ashore yonder,' said the carpenter, standing erect, referring to Braine's story, and indicating by an eager nod of the head the position of the stretch of lustrous beach that looked northwards, but that was now



invisible to us. 'Where'll be a good place to land here?'

All hands were staring about them. The fellow named Forrest said: 'There's a bit of a tree there that'll hold the boat secure. Better let her lay afloat, Mr Lush, 'case of a change o' weather and having to shove off in a hurry.'

'Ay, she'll be all right off that tree,' exclaimed the carpenter.—'In oars, lads! Let her slide quietly stem on. I've heard of coral spikes atearing of boats' bottoms out.'

A few minutes later most of us were ashore, the boat lying quietly secured by a line to a small but solidly rooted tree.

The feel of solid land under my feet was a singular sensation. I had now been incessantly at sea for a time that was growing rapidly into six months, and after those interminable weeks of heaving shipboard, the immovability of this coral rock affected me as something in the last degree novel. I sent a hurried glance around; but the eyes I had strained from over the rail of the barque had acquainted me with every material point of the island, and this closer survey yielded nothing fresh.

Everything was landed; the men seized hold of the various implements they had brought with them to dig up the soil; the carpenter flourished a shovel and called to me: 'Mr Dugdale, have ye no recollection of the number of paces?'

'None whatever,' I responded.

'What d'ye advise, sir?'

'Measure a hundred paces, keeping yonder pillar on a line with that clump of trees there, and then dig.'

'Ay, but Wilkins overheard the capt'n say that the money was buried at the foot of some trees,' said Forrest. 'A hundred paces ain't going to bring us near a tree.'

'I remember nothing about the foot of some trees,' I exclaimed.

'What do you recall?' the carpenter shouted to Wilkins.

'I thought I heerd something about the foot of trees,' answered the fellow, turning his pale meaningless countenance upon Lush. 'But Mr Dugdale 'll know best, of course.'

'If the money be here at all,' said I, 'you may take it as lying hidden somewhere in this space,' and with pointing finger I indicated an oblong surface one end of which went a little beyond the fourth group of trees, whilst I defined the other as starting from about a hundred paces away from the edge of the beach where the boat was.

Ten minutes were now expended in heated discussion. Where should they begin? One or two were for leaving it to me and carrying out my suggestions; others were for measuring two hundred paces and starting there; whilst others were for digging at the roots of the clumps of trees, taking them one after another.

'See here, lads,' cried the carpenter; 'we han't had anything to eat yet. Better tarn to and get some dinner and grog.—By that time we shall ha' settled what to do and be the fitter to go to work.'

This was a proposal which all hands found perfectly agreeable. They flung down the implements they held, and in a very short time were seated about the grass, sheath-knives in hand, making a hearty meal off salt beef and

biscuit and cheese, and tossing down pannikins of rum-and-water. They invited me to join them, and treated me with all the respect I could desire. Again and again, whilst we thus sat, I would direct looks at the barque as she lay as it might seem almost within musket-shot of us. The figure of a man paced the forecable; but Miss Temple was not to be seen. Poor girl! and there arose before me a vision of the Indian—man—a recollection of the proud Miss Temple scarcely enduring to send a glance my way—But this was a reverie that must be speedily disturbed by the company I was in.

They had hoarsely debated until they had come to an agreement, and having concluded their meal, each man lighted his inch of sooty clay, picked up his shovel or his crow, or whatever else had been brought off from the barque, and marched to the nearest of the clump of trees, at the foot of which they fell to digging. Every man was in motion; they laboured with incredible activity, and with such faces of rapturous expectation as again and again forced a smile from me, depressed, anxious, miserable as I was. With my hands clasped behind me, I paced to and fro, watching and waiting. Now that the island had proved an absolute fact, I could no longer feel certain that the gold was a madman's fancy. Nay, I was now indeed imagining that it was all true, and that Braine had fallen crazy through possession of his incommunicable secret acting upon a mind congenitally tainted with insanity, and irremediably weakened yet by the horrible sufferings he had undergone before he was cast away upon this spot. Yet never did I glance at the barque without a prayer trembling from my heart to my lips that the wretches might not find the gold. An old scheme, that this unexpected lighting upon the island had quickened and given shape to, was fast maturing in my mind, even whilst I paced that stretch of grass; but the discovery of the money must render it abortive.

I watched the seamen with an interest as keen as their own, but with hopes diametrically opposite. Presently the carpenter, resting his chest upon his shovel, with the sweat falling in rain from his crimson face, bawled out to me: 'How fur down, d'ye think, we ought to keep on adigging!'

'I would give up at two feet,' said I. 'Captain Braine and his friend would not find strength to go much beyond two feet.'

One of the fellows plumbed with his crow, and bringing it out, with his thumb at the height of the level, cried: 'It's more'n two feet already.'

They dug a little longer, nevertheless; then a few curses ran among them, and the carpenter, with a note of irritation in his voice, roared out: 'No good going on here.—Try this clump.' He walked over to it and drove his shovel into the soil. The men gathered about him, and in a trice were all in motion again.

All this while the sky had remained cloudless, and there was no hint visible in any part of its countenance of a change in this softness and tranquillity of weather. The light off-shore draught, however, had shifted into the west, and at this hour there was a cool and pleasant breeze, that brushed the breast of the sea into a surface of twinkling ripples.

The sailors by this time were pretty well exhausted. The expressions their faces wore, so far as they might be determinable amid the purple, and perspiration, and hair of their dripping and fire-hot visages, showed them full of irritability and disappointment. The carpenter addressed them; I did not catch what he said, but as they came in a body towards the part of the beach where I had been pacing or sitting whilst they worked, I could hear them swearing and cursing whilst they grumbled and growled out their surmises as to where the money was hidden, their eyes roving over the soil as they talked. Lush's face was hard with temper.

'We're agoing to send off some men to furl the lighter canvas,' said he. 'Ha'n't got much opinion of this soil as holding-ground, and she'll drag with that weight of canvas loose, and blow away out of soundings, if we don't see to it.'

'A very proper precaution,' said I coolly. 'You don't mean to give up digging yet, I suppose?'

'Give up?' he cried with his coarse sarcastic air, and frowning upon me out of the rage my inquiry excited. 'No; not if we has to dig the whole island up, as I told ye.'

'Very well. I'll go aboard with the men in the boat. The money, if it is hidden at all, will be hereabouts,' said I, with a wave of my arm, 'and I can be of no further use to you.'

'No, no; you'll stop along with us, if you please,' said the fellow. 'Your recollection of the number of paces may come back to ye, and we can't do without you.'

I sent a look from him to the faces of the fellows who stood listening near us, and without another word folded my arms, and with a spin of my heel, started off on a walk to and fro.

#### THE GROWING DEMAND FOR FLOWERS.

SINCE the days of the decadence of the Roman Empire the employment of flowers has never reached the stage which it has in our own days. So much is this the case, that we might almost be afraid that the turn of the tide of our national upward progress had also been reached, were it not that in other countries, both old and new, the same employment of flowers holds sway. In the United States, flowers are employed with a lavishness which in this country is seldom or never attempted. In the home, the lecture-hall, and the church—at christenings, marriages, and funerals—and at all seasons of the year, the rarest and costliest flowers are used with extravagant profusion. Wealthy Americans visit the nurseries of Europe and buy up the choicest of their inmates for importation to their own homes. At the same time the leading nurserymen of the Old World have representatives travelling in America and disposing of costly plants to fill the greenhouses, which Scotch and English gardeners are eagerly sought for and well paid to manage. But while in America flowers are very much a luxury of the rich, in our land the love of flowers is universal, and confined to no class. It is a passion engrained in the national life. Circumstances may indeed keep it in a dormant condition; but as soon as the means or the

surroundings permit, the passion is certain to be gratified.

The cultivation of flowers as a commercial undertaking has assumed proportions of late years which are somewhat extraordinary. There are no returns, so far as we know, which are obtainable in order to arrive at an estimate of the quantity of flowers grown now, as compared with the quantity cultivated for sale ten years back. But to those who are at all cognisant of the trade the increase must be enormous. The demand for orchids such as *Cypripedium Insigne*, *Odontoglossum Alexandræ*, *Pescatorei*, and *Rossi Majus*, for certain *Dendrobiums*, and for *Cattleyas* and *Lælias*, is always greater than the supply. Daffodils ten years ago might almost be said to have been an undiscovered flower to the general public; but now it is an indispensable article of commerce from January until June. The Dutch import the flowers in quantity. The Scilly Islands may almost be said to be devoted entirely to their culture; and in England and Scotland, large market-gardens, which the owners cropped with strawberries as the paying crop, are to-day stocked with thousands and millions of these fashionable flowers. The Chrysanthemum may be indicated as another flower which as a commercial item has been cultivated to an enormously increased extent. Last year, it was estimated that each of the cultivators depending on Covent Garden, London, for an outlet increased their quantity of this favourite winter flower by thirty per cent.; while the number of growers, especially in the provinces, is annually increasing.

As to who are the purchasers, and the uses to which the flowers are finally put, we can only give a general reply. For many years, at least for the past twenty-five years, flowers have been very profusely used in the homes of the upper classes; but even in their case the process of the flowers has been widening. As a rule, they were content with few or more flowers and plants in public rooms; but now both plants and flowers enter largely into the general furnishing of public apartments; the daily renewing of flowers and bi-weekly or weekly changing of plants forming one of the most important duties of the gardening staff. In dining-rooms it is quite common in good establishments to change the flowers and plants used on the table every day, and sometimes both for breakfast and dinner. Then this taste has increased to such an extent that private apartments, dressing-rooms and bedrooms, are rapidly assuming the same aspect as public rooms. All the material for these and other purposes is, of course, produced on the estate; but no doubt the taste of the upper classes for flowers has had much to do in spreading to a wider circle the same desire for these charming beautifiers of otherwise cold furnishings. We may therefore, we think, take this as the initial cause. During the annual London 'season,' the flowers very often have to be purchased, and so the trade-growers had an impetus given them, other growers at a distance sending to so good a market.

But along with the adornment of houses, personal adornment necessitated a great quantity of flowers being grown; while the practice of decorating altars and pulpits of churches at Easter, widened into the decorations being repeated in

a less lavish style at Christmas, and by-and-by into flowers being used in churches at all seasons except during the six weeks of Lent. The practice of sending wreaths and crosses of flowers as tokens of affection or respect on the demise of friends is a means of consuming an enormous quantity of flowers. Where the circle of friends is large, as in the case of a wealthy person, the money value of the flowers used as mementos will average forty or fifty pounds. This practice is almost universal now.

But another method of employing flowers on these sad occasions has lately come into fashion. The edges and sides of the grave were first rendered less unsightly by means of a lining of evergreen branches. The inevitable followed. Flowers are much prettier than evergreens; and so graves are now being lined and bottomed with flowers, and the coffin itself after being lowered to its place in the tomb is covered with wreaths of the most expensive flowers. There is no doubt that this fashion will spread. The cost is borne by the relatives of the deceased; whereas crosses are the offerings of those outside the family circle; and it is strange how everything that can be done by love to make the aspect of this last service less repulsive is eagerly laid under contribution.

Rapidity of transit must also be allowed its due meed as a means of popularising flowers. Roses and other flowers can be sent during winter from Algiers and the south of France. Covent Garden is in direct communication with all the provincial centres, and if flowers are to be had anywhere, they are sure to be there. Then it may not be commonly known that the railway companies have cheapened the carriage of light materials like flowers far below the postal scale. Flowers to the value of many pounds can be sent long distances at a charge of from sixpence to a shilling. Then we have had the printer lending his aid. Horticultural literature for many years was an expensive article, and was directed mainly to the helping of the professional. But a dozen years or so ago a penny paper was embarked, and proved such a startling success that it has been followed by several other penny sheets. The contents of these papers are generally good, and the extent of their bearing on the employment of flowers must have been great. Then for some time some of the popular magazines have been devoting a portion of their space to these matters; and of late years newspapers have found it necessary to follow in the wake of the magazines. The best method has not as yet, we imagine, been found in either of these, but their help cannot be overlooked here.

One of the most pleasing features of floral decoration in this country is its markedly educational effect. In America, judging by descriptions of the manner of employing flowers given in their own press, quantity and costliness is the predominating idea. As a rule, we have reached a point far ahead of the Americans. Formal bouquets are condemned, and in arranging cut flowers, the beauty and naturalness of putting up a few good flowers in a setting of their own foliage is recognised as the only fitting method. Then we don't, as a people, value a flower because of its rarity. We love the violet of the wood just as much as we do the forced Neapolitan in mid-winter.

Indeed, the favourite flowers of the present day are also the commonest. Carnations are to be had in flower all the year round; so is mignonette; so are roses. Lily of the valley is to be had from November until June; and daffodils for at least six months in the year. These all hold their ground. But fashion changes from year to year. Camellias are now no more *bon ton*, and the masquerade of to-day despises the gardenia. One year, Neapolitan violets bring a big price; the next year some other flower will have taken its place. Blush carnations are a standing flower; but last year, General Boulanger set the rage for red ones; and a certain Duchess devoted to pink Malmaisons set up a big demand for these lovely carnations. Some years, the harassed grower may find his white chrysanthemums of less value than yellow; or both, again, have to give place to those of a bronze or a red shade of colouring. Just now, the race of Palma is coming rapidly into notice, after having been set aside for a dozen years. Crotons, with leafage of the most brilliant colouring, are also becoming more fashionable than they have been for many years.

It will be a matter of rejoicing to the patriotic Scotsman to know that his countrymen have responded to the wants of the times. The gardening Scot has long been recognised as *facile princeps* among fruit; but the market-grower of the London district always claimed precedence among flowers. Now, however, as fine flowers are produced by Scottish growers as by English; and the examples of ferns, of pelargoniums, of hydrangeas, and of other popular plants grown and sold by Scottish florists, are quite as good as those sent from the valley of the Thames.

## WILL PROVANT'S REVENGE.

By T. W. SPEIGHT.

IN THREE CHAPTERS.—CHAP. I.

WHEN Will Provant came back to his native town of Scargill—and a very small town it was, not numbering more than between four and five thousand inhabitants—there was not one person of the many who remembered his going away that recognised him again till he made himself known. But that, perhaps, was hardly to be wondered at, seeing that he had left the town a child of five, and that he had now returned, after an absence of twenty years, a strapping fellow, over six feet in height, bearded like a pard, and speaking with an accent never heard in Scargill before, which of itself tended to make him seem more outlandish than he really was.

Will's father, finding times hard and money scarce, had emigrated to one of the Western States of America; but as to how far he had prospered there, his son vouchsafed but scant information. Will's avowed object in visiting his native town was to 'look up' his grandfather, old Peter Doveridge, who lived in a small gray-stone house about a mile away on the Shulcotes Road, with a housekeeper nearly as old as himself for sole companion. Peter had accumulated whatever fortune he might be possessed of by

the slow patient industry of half a century as proprietor of the chief shop, or store, in the town, where almost everything might be bought, from the silk for a lady's dress to a packet of blacklead or a child's rattle. It was not forgotten among the older inhabitants that when Peter's only child married Robert Provant against his express commands, he vowed that he would never set eyes on her again, and that he 'washed his hands of her' then and there for ever. He was known to be an extremely vindictive man; and that Master Will would have to smart for his mother's disobedience, those who knew Peter best were most inclined to believe. 'Of course he's been sent over to see how the land lies and to try and "soap" the old man over,' said the quidnuncs to each other over their nightly grog at the *King's Head*. 'But he'll be a rare and sharp un if he contrives to throw dust in the eyes of owd Peter.'

And indeed the young fellow's reception by his grandfather might well have chilled the heart of any one less sanguine than himself. 'If thou'st come all this long way thinking to get round me, and that mayhap thou'lt come in for my bit o' brass when I'm dead and gone, thou mayst as well go back to where thou came from,' said the old man, after a long silent scrutiny of Will through his spectacles. 'No one of thy name or breed shall ever touch a penny of mine. Thou can have thy bed and victuals here for a fortnight. After that, if thou chooses to stay, thou must pay for them like any other lodger.'

Whatever Will Provant's feelings in the matter might be, he took care to keep them to himself. No one ever heard him whisper a syllable derogatory of his grandfather. He had not been a week in the little town before he was the most popular person in it. There was a sort of open-air, breezy freshness about him which most people found very taking. Among the men he was hail-fellow-well-met, always ready with a hearty grip of the hand and a song or a story when called on in the bar parlour of the *King's Head* or the *Ring o' Bells* of an evening; and what was perhaps more to the purpose, always seemingly more pleased to treat others than to be treated himself; for, to all appearance, he lacked nothing in the way of means. As for the marriageable portion of the other sex, they were all but unanimous in agreeing that he was the handsomest young fellow who had been seen in Scargill for many a day. He was tall and somewhat gaunt, but muscular and straight as an arrow. He had an olive complexion and thin clear-cut features. He had a smile which came and went with equal facility, and which showed off to advantage his large white teeth. His eyes were dark and brilliant, somewhat overbold, it may be, when bent on a woman, but he could endure them with an expression of pleading tenderness, or Romeo-like passion, whenever it

seemed worth his while to do so. His hair, which he wore long, was, like his beard, a glossy black. He displayed a profusion of showy jewelry; and it was a well-ascertained fact that he always carried a small revolver in a secret pocket. His usual dress was a loose velvet coat over a vest made of the skin of some wild animal; while under the broad turn-down collar of his fancy shirt he wore a silk kerchief of some gay colour with loose flowing ends. His ordinary headgear was a broad-brimmed Panama hat, which, however, he would sometimes exchange for a Mexican sombrero. Small wonder that half the foolish maidens in Scargill fancied themselves in love with him. Little did they dream in their simplicity that behind that semi-romantic exterior, that under that manner so smiling, bland, and debonair, there lurked volcanic passions, only restrained and held in check by a thin crust of conventionality, which might one day burst forth and astonish all beholders.

At the end of a fortnight Will Provant left his grandfather's roof and took lodgings in the town. People wondered and surmised, but to no one did he vouchsafe an explanation. His reasons, however, such as they were, would not have been far to seek. In the first place, even if his grandfather would have continued to board and lodge him for nothing, he was weary of the restraints which a residence under the old man's roof imposed upon him. All his life he had been used to come and go at his own good pleasure, and he found it intolerable to have his meal-times fixed for him to five minutes, and to be told that if he were not indoors by half-past ten he would be locked out for the night.

In the second place, he had fallen desperately in love with sweet Bessie Ford, who was indisputably one of the prettiest girls in Scargill. More than once before had Will suffered from the same complaint, but all previous attacks had been like so many mild outbreaks of nettlerash in comparison with the fierce fever which now consumed him. It was nothing to the purpose that Bessie was already engaged; that fact merely lent an added zest to Will's pursuit of her. He thought far too highly of himself to doubt for one moment his ability to run her sweetheart off and win Bessie for his own. The fellow in question had been pointed out to him—a great hulking, begrimed engine-driver on the railway, Steve Garside by name. Will sniffed disdainfully, and ran his fingers through his glossy beard at the thought of there being any possibility of rivalry between himself and 'Mounseer Smokejack,' as he dubbed Steve contemptuously to himself.

Bessie Ford was a slender, blue-eyed, yellow-haired girl of twenty, whose manners and appearance would not have discredited a far higher position in life than the one she filled; for Bessie's father was merely the foreman porter at the Scargill railway station, while she herself was an assistant in a shop. The shop in question, which called itself an 'emporium,' was devoted to the sale of periodicals, newspapers, stationery, and fancy articles of various kinds, and had, in addition, a small circulating library attached to it, in which the newest novel was at least half-a-dozen



years old. This shop, which was kept by a widow, and in which the only male employed was a youth of sixteen, began to have Will Provant for a customer most days of the week. It was remarkable how frequently he found himself in want of note-paper, or envelopes, or some other of the numerous articles purveyed at the emporium. And then he began to enter on quite a course of novel-reading, changing his volumes as often as three times a week; and when he happened to have Bessie to wait on him, it was singular what a difficult matter the choosing of a book became. Before long he found out the particular half-hour when Mrs Fountain and the other young-lady assistant went up-stairs to dinner and Bessie had the shop to herself. After that his visits were nearly always timed accordingly.

As a matter of course, Bessie was not long in discovering that she herself was the magnet which drew Provant so often to the shop. There was no mistaking his glances of admiration, which were considerably bolder and more outspoken than anything she had been used to, nor the way in which he tried to hold her hand for a moment whenever she had to give him change, which was very often, till at length she found it expedient to place the money on the counter and leave it for him to pick up. Bessie was but a girl and a pretty one, and dearly as she loved Steve Garside in her heart, she could not help being flattered and pleased by the unstinted admiration accorded her by the handsome dark-eyed stranger, about whom there was a flavour of romance which added not a little to his attractiveness. But Bessie was a prudent girl, and when Will began to haunt the shop whenever she was alone in it, she was careful never to emerge from behind the safeguard of the counter. If he wanted a book at such times, he had to go into the back shop and choose it for himself. Still, she could not turn a deaf ear to him—nor, indeed, had she any wish to do so—when he perched himself on one of the stools in front of the counter and began to chat to her, brightly and pleasantly, about places he had been to and people and things he had seen, and to narrate to her romantic episodes of which he had been the hero, in that strange, far-away world from which he had come, almost like a visitant from another sphere, and to which he would doubtless go back ere long. It was all very fresh and fascinating to the country-bred girl, whose imagination often flew away with her far beyond the narrow limits of her every-day surroundings. And then, having discovered that she was passionately fond of flowers, Will rarely failed to appear without one in his button-hole, of which he made a point of begging her acceptance—flowers, too, of a rarer kind than Bessie had ever seen before, whose names she did not know, and which could only have been procured by some occult process from Squire Denton's hot-houses, where, as was well known, the choicest flowers were grown and sent off by rail to the London market. Surely, Bessie argued with herself, even though she was engaged to Steve, there could be no harm in accepting so simple a thing as a flower from Mr Provant and wearing it in her dress; and although she might not consciously do as he sometimes asked her to do, which was to 'think of the giver,' she could not

help being aware that, while in no way disloyal to her sweetheart, he began to fill a very prominent place in her thoughts.

Still, she was not one whit less unfeignedly glad to see Steve when he made his usual weekly appearance at her father's house on Sunday afternoons, nor did she derive any less pleasure from his society when they went for their customary walk through the meadows by the banks of the Windle. Steve's duties compelled him to lodge at Egginton, a great manufacturing town eight miles away, where were the local headquarters of the railway company, so that it was only on Sundays that he could get as far as Scargill. The engagement between the young people was now a couple of years old, and it was merely the fact of Steve having had a bed-ridden mother to keep which had delayed their marriage for so long a time. But Mrs Garside had now been dead for some months, and Steve was putting away every shilling he could spare towards furnishing a little home for his bride. August was now here, and the young engine-driver had won a shy consent from Bessie to their marriage taking place in Christmas week. Steve was a tall muscular young fellow, with dark-gray, honest-looking eyes, a fringe of golden-brown beard, and a by no means uncomely presence. He was still young in years and experience, and at the present time he was employed as driver of one of the local goods-trains: his secret ambition was to rise in his profession till he should one day be entrusted with the driving of one of the main-line great passenger expresses.

Scargill railway station was a good mile and a half from the heart of the town. To those people who wondered why the two had not been brought nearer each other, the answer was that engineering difficulties had stood in the way, and that, as the railway could not be brought closer to the town, the best thing the latter could do was to move itself nearer the railway, which it was proceeding to do, after a fashion, by gradually stretching out an arm, which at no distant date would reach to and include the point in question.

Bessie's usual walk, morning and evening, to and from business was along this rather dreary stretch of road, in which more or less of building operations were always going forward. But there was another and a much pleasanter walk along the banks of the canal, albeit a little longer, by means of which she could get between home and business, and during the summer months that was often the way she took. The walk was screened by a fringe of trees, which shaded it pleasantly from the sun, and gave it at the same time an air of semi-seclusion.

Bessie hardly knew whether to be pleased or annoyed when, one evening as she was on her way home, she encountered Will Provant leaning over the stile which gave admission to the foot-path by the canal. Was he there accidentally, or on purpose to intercept her? was the question she asked herself; but it was one she was unable to answer. In any case, he greeted her with his frank-seeming smile, which displayed his gleaming teeth through the black rift of his moustache and beard, and turned to walk with her, as if it were the most natural thing in the world that he should do so. She could see that his eyes took note of the flower in her belt, which he had

given her earlier in the day, and she was afraid that he might draw certain inferences therefrom such as she was far from wishing him to draw. His talk was easy and animated, as it always was. Presently he brought it round to a topic as to which he had hinted more than once already; to-day, however, he spoke openly. Such a charming girl as Bessie was far too good—'far too rare and precious'—to be buried alive in such a 'dog-rot' place as Scargill, where she was unappreciated and altogether out of her proper sphere. Her true home ought to be in America, more especially in one of the glorious Western States. In Kansas or Arizona, for instance, she would at once be elevated to her proper position—that of a 'Society Queen'—whatever that might be—and have all the 'chivalry' within a circuit of fifty miles 'worshipping at her shrine'—and so on, and so on, in a similar high-faluting strain. Bessie listened in silence, her bosom rising and falling a little more quickly than usual, but finding not a word to say in reply. Will parted from her at the point where she had to turn off for home. As he held her hand for a moment and lifted his soft broad-brimmed hat, there came a flash into his eyes which caused hers to flutter and fall on the instant, and left her blushing and trembling as he turned to go back by the way he had come.

Bessie Ford was not without some of the weaknesses of her sex. It was impossible to resist deriving a species of sweet satisfaction from the knowledge that more than half the young women in the town envied her her undoubted conquest of the 'handsome American,' as Will was called, despite the fact of his being a native of the place. Two evenings later she found Will waiting at the stile again. Again he kept her company to within a short distance of home; but Bessie felt that if this sort of thing were to go on, it could not fail to come to her sweetheart's ears. She and Will had been seen together by more than one person who knew of her engagement to Steve, and gossip flies fast in small country towns. So for the next few evenings she shunned the dangerous path by the canal, and went home by the omnibus which plied between the *King's Arms Hotel* and the railway station.

A week passed without Will troubling her in any way, and then, with the inconsistency of her sex, she began to long to see him again. She missed his bright talk and the flowers he used to bring her. His visits to the shop had made a pleasant little break in the monotony of her life, and the cessation of them affected her like a loss. The fact was, although, of course, Bessie was unaware of it, that Will had been away for four or five days attending a race meeting in a neighbouring county. There came, however, a certain noon when he found his way once more to Mrs Fountain's shop. It was during the half-hour when he knew that, in all probability, he should find Bessie alone. The sparkle in her eyes and the blush that suffused her cheeks avouched to him that she was not displeased to see him again. And how lovely she looked! Nowhere among all the great ladies on the grand stand had he seen a face which in his eyes was at all comparable to Bessie's. He was carrying a bouquet of choice orchids—flowers more strange

and exquisite in their tropical loveliness than any Bessie had ever seen before.

'For you,' he said as he touched the flowers lightly with his lips and then placed them on the counter in front of her.

'Oh, how lovely!' broke involuntarily from her lips. Then, a moment later: 'But indeed, and indeed, Mr Provant, I can't accept them.'

'Can't!' responded Will with a lifting of his heavy brows. 'If you have a reason, I should like to hear it.'

Bessie hesitated, and the colour in her cheeks deepened. How was it possible to explain that there had suddenly come over her a consciousness that she was in some sort wronging the man whose promised wife she was in accepting flowers from another unknown to him? No such thought had ever struck her before. Will was watching her with an amused smile, under which, however, lurked something veiled and sinister. He could give a pretty good guess at the feelings at work in her mind. 'Reason or no reason,' he went on to say, 'I've brought them purposely for you; and if you won't accept them, why, I'll just scrunch 'em under my heel and— But that's nonsense. Take them; they are yours.' Then, without giving her time for any further disclaimer, he said: 'So, you little witch, you have taken to going home by 'bus, eh! One would have thought the footpath by the canal, with the sunlight shining through the leaves, was a far pleasanter road these autumn evenings.'

'I suppose this is a free country, and that I can go home whichever way I please,' answered Bessie with a toss of her head.

'Of course you can, my blue-eyed darling,' responded Will composedly.—Bessie stared at him: he had never addressed her in such a strain before.—'I am not so stupid as not to know your reasons for going home by 'bus; but you won't find it quite so easy to get rid of me as all that.' He hitched the stool on which he was sitting a little nearer the counter, and resting his arms on the latter, fixed his dark glowing eyes full on Bessie's face. 'I think it's about time that you and I came to an understanding,' he said. 'Six weeks from now I am going back to the States, and I mean to take you with me!'

'Oh!' was all the startled girl found breath for.

'Don't misunderstand me. I mean to take you as my wife.—Don't speak just yet. I know what you are about to say—that you are already engaged. But what has that to do with it? Such a girl as you were never intended to be the wife of an engine-driver. I have loved you, Bessie, from the moment I set eyes on you, with a passion, an intensity such as yonder tepid-blooded smokejack never had the capacity even to dream of. What do such as he know of love as we know it in that newer world beyond the sea? You shall be mine, Bessie—the wife of a man who knows how to appreciate you, and who can place you in a sphere such as Nature has fitted you to adorn. I have made up my mind to buy a big ranche way down Californy and to make you its mistress. It will be a glorious life—a life such as you who have grown up in a one-horse place like this can only faintly imagine. There, for months at a time, no speck

of cloud darkens the sky; there the most beautiful flowers are as common as weeds are here. Your home shall be built in the midst of an orange grove; you shall have servants to wait upon you hand and foot, and as many horses to ride as there are letters to your name. You shall'—

But at this point his flight of rigmarole came to an abrupt end. A premonitory cough at the head of the stairs warned him of the approach of Mrs Fountain. He had spoken so rapidly and with such impassioned fervour that Bessie had found it impossible to interrupt him. Now, however, there was a moment's chance, for Mrs Fountain was old and came down-stairs very slowly.

'If you knew that I am engaged, as you say you did, you had no right to speak to me as you have,' exclaimed the girl in low but vehement tones. 'I must request that you will never speak to me on such a subject again, and also that you will cease to bring me any more flowers, because I shall certainly decline to accept them.'

For a moment or two Will's lips turned a blue-white, and his eyes became like two points of vivid flame, but it was a spasm of passion which vanished as quickly as it had come, and when he spoke it was with his usual easy, smiling nonchalance. 'Do you know, Bessie, that you look most ducedly pretty when your "dander's riz," as we say in the States? I calculated how you would feel called on to take it just at first, consequently I ain't disappointed. But if you think Will Provant's going to take No for an answer down on the nail like that, you were never more mistaken in your life. Take time to think it over, my pretty—second thoughts are nearly always best. Listen. The day you promise to be my wife I'll buy you a twenty-guinea engagement ring.' A moment later he was gone, leaving his flowers behind him.

### SOME MOORISH MENDICANTS.

THRICE blessed is that beggar whose lot is cast in a country over which floats the green flag sacred to Mohammed: happy in living in a land where mendicancy is the recognised profession for all unfortunates who have failed in other arts and occupations; happy in his climate; happy in the fewness of his needs compared with those of his less-favoured northern brother, whom neither the law nor the weather will permit to go half-clad; happiest of all in his immunity from the nagging attentions of a pitiless constabulary, for of regular municipal police there are none to harshly move him on; or, if he prove refractory, to march him into the dread presence of the stipendiary, and procure him a sentence of fourteen days for daring to loaf about the streets without visible means of support. It would almost appear that in the case of the mendicant there is some approach to a geographical distribution of happiness, for it is incontestable that along the Mohammedan parallel of latitude beggardom is better off than elsewhere, enjoying as it does the gracious patronage of the law and the climate.

As for Great Britain, the levy of the poor-rate has done much to deprive the begging profession

of its attractions, by seriously diminishing its lucrativeness; for there is nothing benumbs the charity of an average citizen so effectually as the periodical visits of the rate-collector.

Just contrast, for instance, the shivering, badgered existence of the English beggar with the pleasant life of a Moorish member of the craft. For the *n<sup>a</sup>* part of a penny, which the fractional copper coinage of his country supplies him in the shape of *blanquios*, one hundred and fifty to the franc, the beggar of Morocco can keep his rag of soul and his body very comfortably together for the day. The sunshine alone represents meat and drink and clothes and coppers to that fortunate individual. No inexorable 'peeler' bids him move on, for there is no statute in his land to proclaim begging a misdemeanour. There is so much comfort in the sunshine that he does not feel impelled to create an artificial warmth within him at the bar of the nearest house of call when Charity has paused to drop a penny in his greasy hat. Nor, for that matter, has he any greasy chapeau in hand for the reception of penn'orths of compassion from passers-by; and let this be recorded to his credit, that to whatever depth of poverty he may be reduced, he never sinks to the indignity of cast-off clothing; though whether this is to be ascribed to the economical practice followed by well-to-do Moors of utilising their old *jelabs* for blankets when past use as *jelabs*, and when too shabby to be any longer employed as blankets, cutting them up into mule-cloths; or, on the other hand, is owing to some innate nobility of character peculiar to the mendicant of Morocco which prevents him stooping to the degradation of arraying himself in the ex-garments of gentility, we must leave to the charitable interpretation of the reader. And not only in their appearances and appurtenances, but in their business methods, are the beggars of north and south as different as the latitudes they live in; for while the free and enlightened British beggar besieges your back-door or slinks after you to whine his plaintive tale (redolent of rum) into your private ear, the Moor sits cowed like a friar at the mosque door or at the market gate, gravely silent, contemplating the ground at your feet; or if he speaks at all, it is to Allah, to whom he addresses his supplications, to Allah and his prophet Mohammed; and if you are moved to give, he receives your dole as his due, for not only are you therein obeying the behest of the Koran, but you are feeling an advocate to proclaim hereafter, at the Great Session, when it shall stand you in most stead, the good deeds you did upon earth.

In a certain covered alley-way, the name of which in Arabic is *Jama el Kebir*, leading out of the principal street of Tangier, by the side of the great mosque, there is a little colony of beggars established, attracted to the spot by the shelter it affords against the excessive blaze of mid-day sunshine, and by the constant stream of devout Moslems who at all hours shake off their slippers and enter the church by the side-door in the alley, from whom, coming out of the presence of Allah, a meed of charity may the more hopefully be anticipated. The alley itself is in a manner sanctified by contact with the holy edifice, and not infrequently, in the course of the day's



religious ceremonial, the voice of the *alema* within the mosque, wailing the litanies, comes reverberating and resonant into the outer air, carrying with it a strain of lamentation as from a man labouring in spiritual agony. Lying east and west, this tiny roofed street admits the sun into its recesses during certain hours only, that is, before ten in the morning and after three P.M., when he can be trusted to behave himself with propriety and moderation. Here, as into a harbour of refuge, drift the beggarly remnants of decayed mendicants, and coiling themselves up within their *jelābs*, only leaving their feet sticking out in some chosen blot of sunshine, sleep away the memory of their woes; and if it do not offend you to stand beside one of these sackfuls of humanity, observe narrowly the protruding feet, and you will see the toes open and shut from time to time, like the claws of lobsters, in the excessive enjoyment of the warmth and the siesta. Suddenly, provoked at last out of all patience, one of the sleepers wakes and sits up in a fury of resentment, plunges his hand down deep into the folds of his ragged robe, and after a brief but determined resistance on the part of the flea, drags it out in triumph, and having flung it away from him, subsides again into his rags and doze.

Yet even in this sanctum of poverty a small industry has established itself (on a straw buffet) in the shape of stick-carving, and in the person of a cadaverous Moor, of somewhat dilapidated aspect, with a very sharp nose and a rather blunt penknife, which latter is his only tool. The other accessories of his trade consist of a few tiny dishes of coarse red-lead, and indigo *au naturel*, a pot of sand, a bowl of water, a correct eye, some artistic talent, and an inexhaustible fund of patience. With these means at his disposal he will carve you patterns on picture-frames, or illustrate a walking-stick with alternating squares and rhomboids and triangles of red-lead and indigo all the way down in a spiral coil from the crook to the ferrule. From time to time, to counteract the crampedness of his position, he breaks off to solace himself by blowing aimlessly up and down the gamut of a toy melodeon, after which he goes to work again refreshed and invigorated.

It is not so many years ago since the penal code of Morocco included mutilation among its recognised punishments for larceny. Instead of taking away the thief's liberty and keeping him out of harm's way at the further expense of the community whom he had already robbed, it took away his eyesight, and thus deprived him, with merciless directness, of all future power of coveting his neighbour's goods. Not a few of these empty sockets are to be seen in the streets of Tangier to-day. There is one eyeless beggar whose post is on the steps of the mosque, and whose continual cry is upon God and Mohammed. 'Allah-r-bhi! Allah-r-bhi!' he iterates and reiterates in guttural Arabic with pathetic and exhausting insistence, lifting his blind face to the passers-by on which the drops of sweat glisten in the sunshine. After bleating his passionate appeal for some space of time without intermission and without result, he falls into a momentary despair, and drooping his head under the shadow of the cowl he wears, murmurs to himself over the fruitlessness of his supplications. At

nightfall this beggar shifts his quarters to one of the city's gates, where a little company of his fellows, with faces blanched by leprosy, clamour upon Allah till the last passenger and the last mule have gone by, and the Moorish sergeant, with his lantern and musket, comes to shut and bolt the great wooden doors.

No less pathetic, and much more weird, is the figure of the ancient diminutive wizard in cowl and gown who sits rocking himself back and forth ceaselessly in the gutter at the side of the Kasba lane, for all the world like a little toy mandarin on rockers. Asses walk over him, and the world goes by regardless; but for all that he never ceases to cry, over and over, over and over, with breathless haste, the name of Allah in every variety of accent and key.

Much more Saxon than Moor, in appearance at anyrate, is the red-haired blind beggar lad who is generally to be seen hurrying and blundering at a reckless speed through the crowded streets, going nowhere in particular at a headlong pace which, if he enjoyed the use of his eyes, he would hardly dare attempt. It has been suggested, not without some show of probability, that he derives his carrotty locks and Saxon face from some forefather of his of English birth, who in the good old piratical days may have fallen into the hands of Moorish sea-rovers, turned renegade to save his life, and completed his domestication by taking unto himself a Moslem woman to wife. This boy has picked up a trifle of pigeon-English and turns it to account in supplicating alms: 'Givee penny to povero blindo!' If he overhears you conversing in English in the street, he fastens himself on you, lays hold of you by whatever article of attire he can clutch, and will on no account let go till you have paid a ransom for your liberty.

There is another and a smaller boy-beggar who is usually to be found—or rather who usually finds you—on that slice of beach hemmed in by the town's battlements between the sea and the Custom-house. Here, as you stroll down towards the stone jetty, a very small boy in an orange-tawny *jelāb* (his only garment) suddenly pops round a stranded boat, 'Sirs' you, and beseeches charity with outstretched hand. With a negative shake of the head and an impatient 'la—la, emtche!' you pass on; but, not by any means to be so easily repulsed, he dodges round the boat again, and towing forth a sightless, tottering old man, bears down on you afresh, confident that this time, with so overwhelming a claim on your compassion, he will not be refused.

A little way off, sitting half asleep in the shade on the sand, you come upon a company of three more decrepit mendicants, enjoying a peaceful harbourage while their boy-guides disport themselves gaily on the beach and harass the water-carriers, with whom they exchange a great deal of playful banter and occasional handfuls of pebbles or mud.

Yet, again, there is your holy beggar—your mendicant saint or 'santo,' who, being afflicted with paralysis or imbecility, conceives himself therefore one of the chosen children of Allah, and levies his tax upon your piety rather than your charity. It is no matter to him that you owe no allegiance to Mohammed; on the contrary, he appears to make a particular merit of fleeing



'Christian dogs' of their *blanquios*. 'Santo!' says he, by way of introduction, tapping himself on the breast, 'una peseta—givee me! Santo!' and in further corroboration, produces a string of beads and dandles them before your eyes. Why he is a Saint it would be impossible to predict, judging by his appearance. Perhaps he is considered holy because he is so very dirty; perhaps because the left half of his unprepossessing visage is rendered still less attractive by a stroke; or it may be that he has been thrice to Mecca, and thereby sanctified himself for ever and a day.

But by far the most magnificent beggar in Tangier is that old scamp of an Arab with the keen hawk face and grizzly goat's beard and but one leg, who sits perched royally on a high stool before the rich Jew Nahon's door in Soko Street. Fantastically rigged out with coloured cottons and medals and a great twisted turban, he cuts a rakish figure, and by his warlike air and the long assegai which he carries, gives one to suppose that he must have lost his leg in some desperate tribal conflict; for it is pretty evident that the old fellow has been a fire-eater in his day. Letting the Faithful go by unchallenged, he accosts all strangers, loudly demanding a 'peseta' of each one—not a stiver less—and when you answer him with a stare of amused denial and pass on, the hoary old scamp launches after you some gay impertinences in Arabic, at which the loungers laugh, to your confusion.

#### A YARN SPUN IN MANITOBA.

You say you would like to know what our life in Manitoba really is like. The best I can do is to send you my diary in the shape of a story. As I did not keep one until Seymour joined me, I cannot give you my first year out here, alone under a tent spread over a barrel; or in the winter, alone in my shanty, which was so cold, that my beef, six feet from the stove, never thawed out till the spring. It was mostly misery, though I didn't know it at the time; anyway, I don't look back on it with pleasure.

It must be nearly seven A.M. But this is a Monday morning in October (1888), and my week for ploughing was out yesterday. Not that we plough on Sunday, but the one of us whose week it is, is responsible for the bulls Moses and Aaron, and for their Sunday capers. Last week I had to get breakfast and then work the bulls; while Seymour did the 'chores' (that is, milk the cows, feed the pigs, &c.), cooked, and did odd jobs. To-day puts us the other way on. I said to myself: 'It feels cold; I won't get up first to-day. I got up first last week and had the fire lit before Seymour stirred. I believe he is shamming to be asleep, and waiting for me. He can wait. I'll have another snooze;' and I turned over to carry out my resolve, when a shower of earth from the unfinished door-frame made me roll back. A hen was looking inquiringly in through the gap, and seeing everything quiet, came fluttering down. I have a prophetic feeling she will land on the grub table, which she does with a little nervous cackle.

Perhaps before going any further I had better give you a notion of our house. It is what is

known as a 'dug-out.' Outside, it looks like a huge grave-mound, with a window at either end, and a ditch running up to a door in the side. On a dark night in winter you might walk over the top of it, imagining it to be a drift. But 'come right in,' as the Kanucks have it, and you will find two sheetless beds, on bedsteads made of poles, with string stretched across them, two tables, three chairs, some rough shelves, a gun-rack, a stove in the middle of the room, and boxes under the beds to act as wardrobes. So much for our furniture.

The floor and the walls for four feet are of mother-earth; then come logs with mud-plaster between. A post, supporting the ridge-pole, bristles with nails, from which hang frying-pans, clothes, a looking-glass, &c.

To return to our hen amongst the victuals. She has already put the teapot and a tin cup on the floor; and after craning her neck over the edge and looking sideways down at them, she looks around for a safe place to put her egg. The open flour-sack seems to have attractions, but the cat is wandering round the bottom of it. She turns her head; Seymour's bed catches her eye; just by his side there is a hole in the mattress. With another nervous cackle and flutter, which reminds me of an old country-woman crossing a street in front of a cab, she alights on Seymour's bed. I feel convinced, if he was asleep before, he must be awake now; yet he does not offer to get up. I dozed again, when her rejoicings over the egg awoke me. She has laid it by his side and is pacing his body, in time to her shrieks. He wakes with a start; the egg is no longer of the shape over which a hen would like to brood. She is fluttering against the pane; a cowhide boot is humming through the air; it hits her and carries her through the pane; and now she is on the roof expressing her indignation—while Seymour is expressing his in shocking language below.

We both feel cross as we dress, for it is late and cold, and the wind is blowing through the broken pane. Seymour with chattering teeth shoves a sack in the hole and starts to light the fire; while I go out to milk and do the chores, which done, I come in with a good appetite.

Seymour places in silence a bowl of hot bread and milk on the table. My appetite goes. Bread and milk is very nice; but when you have had it and nothing else from Thursday's dinner to Sunday's supper, it gets monotonous; and this being Monday morning, I had expected duck, as on Sundays we go out to fill the larder, and yesterday we brought in six. I mention 'duck' to Seymour. He only says: 'There was no time to cook one.'

Well, it is all there is. I swallow it and load up my pipe; it has often before now helped to make a satisfactory meal of a poor one, as, when under a tent, it was often the only part of my meal that had seen the fire.

I wash the dishes and start for a new 'dug-out.' I am making for the calves. By eleven A.M. my opinion is, 'Bread and milk is poor stuff to dig on; I'll go and get dinner.'

As I got out of the pit, I noticed a prairie fire, or rather the smoke of it; the wind seemed blowing it our way too. I considered: 'Had we better go and plough some more furrows at the southern fireguard, or have dinner?' My stomach dis-

tinently said: 'Blow the furrows; let's have some duck.'

I didn't waste much time over the ducks. Having made a roaring fire, I singed off all the feathers of two, except for a little stubble in islands here and there. I put them to roast, and potatoes and turnips to boil, waited for Seymour, who, when he came, good-naturedly overlooked the stubble on the duck and the bone in the potato. We hold a council of war, in which it is decided that the occasion admits of a pipe after dinner; as the wind is so light, there's lots of time.

As we go down, we see the first tongue of fire, running as fast as a horse could trot, north-east; but it is two miles to the west of us. We begin burning small patches on the south of the guard, keeping it under with bag and broom. This lasts until sunset, when we see the fire, half a mile off, coming for us from behind a bend in the creek. We go to meet it, as the more of it we can put out, the more feed for the cattle next year. Neighbour Benton having put out his share of fire round his farm, and seen it safely past him, has come with his three sons to our aid, and by midnight all danger is past.

This is Friday; we have to go to Brant, our town, some seven miles off, to get a plough-point. I want some warm felt boots; we both want powder and shot. We strike a bee-line for Brant. I buy my boots; my feet aren't small, and in felts you have to take a size and a half larger than in ordinary boots, which brings me to elevens, as they have not any half-sizes. Seymour grins as he sees me mount for going home. I try to pay no attention; but as we pass the hotel loungers, some wag calls out: 'Come out of them boots! Come out! No use saying you aren't there; I can see your arms hanging out!'—which raises a laugh, in which Seymour joins.

'Well, small things please little minds,' I console myself with replying; but I wish I had held my tongue, for a grim old-timer, who had been silently watching us, exclaims: 'True, true, sonny, and big things please big minds; there's nought mean or little about them boots.'

We don't get home till sunset. Going to Brant always wastes a day. Our mail is generally brought up for us by one or other of our neighbours once a fortnight. We had a budget to-day for Ward, a neighbour of ours, which we delivered on our way home, taking tea there.

Ward is a married man with five children, who is always advising me to marry. 'Why, you have two cows, two ponies, five pigs, some poultry, &c. If I were in your place, I would not be unmarried twenty-four hours.'

So far, I have failed to see why the possession of so much stock should necessitate a wife; besides, Seymour owns half of everything; and even if I were alone, she would want a house, and sheets perhaps, and no more expeditions on Sunday; and possibly the pipe would be tabooed in the house, and— But I quail at the very thought of even these 'ands,' and I can see still more, and fancy further.

Saturday.—The bulls all this forenoon went 'shocking'; Moses, the nigh ox, crowding Aaron out of the furrow. I think I have an idea which will make them walk in the way they should go. Some nails driven through a board, so as to leave

the eighth of an inch sticking through, I hang over Aaron's side, the points towards Moses. I suppose the Society of Cruelty to Animals might object; I only wish they were doomed to plough an acre a day with Moses and Aaron. We start. All goes well for quarter of an hour; then Moses takes a lean-up against Aaron. He is electrified—he is the boss of the two—he stops short, and looks at Aaron, who at once takes advantage of the halt to pass up a cud to chew. Innocence is written in his every feature, as, with half-closed eyes and nose in air, he enjoys this delicious cud. Even Moses is satisfied, for without a word from me he begins his crawl once more. We are nearing the end of the furrow, when he again reclines against Aaron; this time he doesn't stop to consider a moment, his right hindleg is brought up to his ear, and he deals Aaron, who had been hanging back, a kick in the snout; and here things get a little mixed. Aaron recoils to curl his nose in the air and snort through it, as it hurt; but Moses turns on him with his horns, and chases him round the plough, giving him a dig at every chance, at which poor Aaron begins to bawl. They have twice described a circle round the plough, and now are happy: the nigh ox on the off-side, the chains twisted, their heads where their tails ought to be, facing the plough, which is a rod from the furrow; and they gaze at me with half-closed eyes, as they chew the cud of contentment.

I don't attempt to reproach them; I feel too utterly squashed. I can unharness and harness them again in five minutes; but it takes me a quarter of an hour to get them going again. And till Seymour's welcome signal to unhitch, as it's time to start on a duck-hunting expedition, I am pulling at Moses' line and howling 'Haw' in every inflection of tone of command and entreaty that my voice is capable of.

I unhitch, and find Dave Benton and Rule at the house. Dave has brought over lots of delicacies, jam, pies, cakes, &c. We take a frying-pan, eggs and bread, butter and salt, also some wood, as where we are going there is no fuel, which accounts for the tameness of the ducks, as the Indians for that reason never camp there.

It is bright moonlight, and we are having a pipe over a cheerful fire after a good fill, when the dogs begin to raise Cain over something in the long slough-grass. Dave, the only one who has his gun handy, rushes over, and soon fires. There's a cry, and something springs at him. He is a very cool fellow is Dave; he gives a vigorous lunge with his gun-barrels, which makes it swerve a little to one side, and the claws that were meant for his face only tear his coat collar as the brute falls; and he gives it a second barrel, which finishes it. We are with him by this time, and find it to be a full-grown lynx, which is brought to the camp-fire and skinned, while we congratulate Dave, and eagerly clutch at the guns at every noise. At last we turn in, and go to sleep to be wakened at dawn by Rule, who pulls our blankets off, which causes some language; but soon a hot breakfast and pipe sets us in good humour. Thanks to him, we'll catch the ducks at breakfast some five miles off. On our way we pass a clump of willows; something springs up, and Rule, whose turn it is now, fires both barrels in quick succession, and rolls

over a jumping deer, which, after we have dressed it, must weigh about a hundred pounds. It is close season now; until November there is a fine for shooting them; but that wasn't thought of in the excitement of the moment, so we impress on each other to keep it 'mum.'

The lakes at last; the largest covers some ten acres. The ponies are picketed, and we start for the bulrushes which grow all round the edge. Seymour and Dave on the east and south sides begin the butchery, driving them up to Rule and me on the north and west. They are so tame, they don't fly, but just puddle from one of us to the other. I am the worst shot, but have got five duck. It is getting on in the afternoon. Dave and Rule come to me weighed down with some twenty ducks apiece. Dave proposes to start home; we have twenty miles of strange prairie between us and civilisation.

The sun is set. We have duck-soup for supper, which takes our last stick. Our clothes are wet, and the night is cold. They take off their clothes; I, thinking of the morrow, leave mine on, and after some shivering, go to sleep. Morning, I watch them insinuating shivering legs down clammy breeches, and hug myself for my forethought, being comparatively warm. We reach home about twelve, and all have dinner at the Bentons'. After dinner, the ducks are spread on the bare floor to divide up: in all, eighty-one ducks and three geese. We divide evenly, Seymour and I counting as one. We can't eat all our share before it will go bad, so Ward and other neighbours come in for some.

It is December; our diet changes to jack and bush-rabbit, and prairie-chicken, which they say is a grouse.

Seymour has been visiting the Rules a good deal lately. Colonel Rule is a retired Indian officer, younger son of some earl, I think; he doesn't like the Canadians, nor they him. Bob Miller annoyed him very much the other day. Observing the colonel's crest on his carriage, he said, thinking to flatter: 'That's a fine pictur' on yer buggy, kurnel! A man I worked for at the Portage, he had a fine ore, too, on his grocery wagon what he peddled with. I've heard they have queer animals in India; is that a pictur' of one?' The 'pictur' in question was some heraldic monster that might have been a cross between a dragon and a nightmare.

Christmas Day, nine a.m., clear and fine. Ten a.m., the blizzard. We were to have gone to Rule's for the day; but it is impossible. Benton also invited us, but Seymour said he would go to Rule's, and I might go to Benton's. Rule has a pretty daughter, called Enid, with rather an uncommon style of face and colouring. She is dark, black hair, violet eyes, straight nose, and pointed chin; her eyebrows are straight and thin, and her cheeks have a healthy flush of red showing through the clear dark skin. She is about nineteen.

The stable is only forty yards from the house, but I can't see it for snow-dust. You can't call it snow; it is as fine as table-salt, and as hard as ice. The wind is blowing a gale; it has blown the heavy wagon-box off the sleighs. I take a piece of string in my hand, the end of a ball which I leave with Seymour, and grope my way to the stable. Although every bit of me is covered

except the eyes, and I breathe through a woollen scarf twice round my face, the wind takes my breath away, and confuses me as much as if it were wood-smoke. My eyelashes keep freezing together, the upper against the lower, and I have to keep rubbing them.

I have twice to come back to the door and start afresh. When I get into the dug-out, I jerk the string twice; and Seymour follows up the string, and we feed the cattle together out of a supply we keep inside against such days—watering isn't thought of.

Eight p.m., bright moonlight; fine, but bitterly cold. There's not a breath of wind. I look out of the door for a few seconds, and feel a bee-like sting on the cheek that shows Jack Frost is busy. I rub it with snow, and am just shutting the door when I see something dark on the snow of the prairie—a wolf, I think. Seymour gets his rifle, and we put on cap, scarf, and mitts, and go out. Seymour takes a shot, and hits the snow some three feet to one side, and puts in another cartridge, when we see with horror the supposed wolf lift up an arm, and the frozen face of a man shines white in the moonlight. He is crawling on all-fours in the snow. We rush to him, and between us, with considerable exertion, get him in to the dug-out; not by the stove, but close to the door, which is left ajar, so that he shan't thaw too rapidly. It is Colonel Rule! Seymour rushes down to the well with two pails for water, while I slit open sleeves, boots, socks, &c., with a knife. Having poured the water into a tub, Seymour throws in some snow; to thaw a frozen member too quickly means mortification of that member. The well-water, being from a spring, though feeling ice-cold in summer, in winter steams in the open air like hot water. We bathe his face, hands, and feet, which are all frozen, and are glad to find, that though the frost has spread all over his face, it has not struck deep. His hands are the worst; they keep freezing the water in contact with them, and we have to keep peeling a crust of ice from off them. At last they cease to form the crust, and gradually get a slight, very slight tint in them. Then the door is shut, and we lay him on a bed. It is awful agony, the thawing out a badly frozen member; but he hasn't even groaned; he whispers something to Seymour, who bends down to listen. Seymour, as soon as he hears it, pulls on his mitts and gets down his snow-shoes, and hurries out, saying, as he snatches up a buffalo coat: 'Enid is in Jackson's cellar!' I stop him, telling him to take some grub with him, and an axe to make a fire with; and I give him a chunk of frozen milk, and a saucepan to warm it in. He takes them, and is gone.

Colonel Rule is in a faint. We have a bottle of whisky in the house; he has had about a tablespoonful, and I give him more. After an hour he is able to sit in a chair and smoke a pipe. Possibly a doctor might object; I don't; and though talking is an exertion to him, I gather that he, with Enid, started for a service at nine a.m., held at a neighbour's west of us; that the storm caught them as they were passing, a mile from Jackson's deserted house. He led the pony into the house, and they went into the cellar. At about sunset, when the wind went down slightly, seeing Enid was shivering with

cold, though she declared she was warm, he thought he would strike for a man who lived two miles off, and bring back some food and matches for Enid. He soon lost his way; and at last merely went on walking to keep warm. The snow took him up to the calves of the legs, which made walking very hard, so that at last, when the wind did go down, and he saw our lumber shanty in the moonlight, his strength failed him. He began to crawl, throwing off his scarf, on account of the ends getting under his knees; and his face without the scarf got frozen. He saw me open the door just as he was getting sleepy, and tried to call, but couldn't make more than a groan. When Seymour fired, he raised his hand as a last effort, and knew no more till he found himself in here.

After a while, I see him to bed; and taking some more things, think I will go to Seymour's help; but as I get outside, I meet Seymour on his snow-shoes, carrying Enid on his shoulder. He has carried her the last half-mile; Jackson's is a mile and a half away. Enid at once cries out to me: 'How is my father?' Being told well and sound asleep, she runs into the house to the bed and kisses him gently, for fear of waking him. Seymour and I sit a short while in the house; and Seymour tells me in an undertone how he found Enid in the cellar, nearly faint, but unfrozen. He made a fire, and warmed the milk, which, with some bread, set her to rights. Here Enid interrupts, to thank me for thinking of the food; Seymour told her he had nearly come without it.

Enid had insisted on starting there and then to see her father. She put on Seymour's snow-shoes, and got tired out with the new exercise at the end of a mile; and then Seymour put on his snow-shoes again and carried her.

We say 'Good-night' to her, and make a straw bed in the stable. The next morning, Colonel Rule, after a hearty breakfast, went to sleep; he is all right, except for one finger, that pains him rather, and a weakness, which will go away with rest. It is pleasant having a woman at the breakfast table, especially if she is nineteen and good-looking.

I leave to go to Rule's son to tell him of his father and sister. Hearing they are safe, Rule says he will wait till after dinner to bring them home. We had an after-dinner pipe, and then started in a jumper with two ponies. The snow is too deep for good sleighing; the ponies can only trot here and there. At last we reach home, very cold. We put the ponies in the calf-stable and come in.

As I enter, I see a grin on Rule's face, and the bearing of Seymour and Enid fills me with alarm. Colonel Rule is smoking his pipe very contentedly, pretending to read an old dictionary, really watching Enid and Seymour. Well, here's a go! My suspicions are true; there's to be a marriage, and I am to live alone in this hole. It's too bad of Seymour! I am also to come to the marriage. I am afraid my face falls, for Enid kindly says: 'Oh, it won't be a swell affair at all. Father will lend you a collar, and your Sunday clothes are good enough.' I thank her for the collar. I did have twelve when I landed in this country; but I have never put one on since I left Winnipeg, and I don't know where they are.

And now I have told you enough to give you some idea of the life of the Erics and Oscars. Isn't it Carlyle who asks for them to come out here with steam-ploughs, &c.? We all imagine we are Erics and Oscars; but we don't run to steam-ploughs and etceteras. It is bulls and Shag-nappie ponies we patronise, and many of us get very sick of them, and hanker for something more exciting, and fancy the original Erics and Oscars had a bully time of it. I confess I have these fits at times; but I generally blame Seymour's pancakes for them.

#### IN DREAMLAND.

I CANNOT go back to the past, dear,  
Nor dream as I dreamed before,  
Ere the sunlight had left me for ever,  
When you smiled in my dreams as of yore.

I know it was only a dream, dear,  
That has passed with the spring-tide away;  
It was scarcely your fault if I deemed it  
No dream when we played our play.

It was not your fault that I woke, dear,  
And the pain of the waking is mine;  
It has never brought sadness or sorrow  
To that golden head of thine.

For my life was so fresh and so fair, dear,  
And you loved me (it was but a dream),  
And my life was a poem, made glorious  
By a vision which did but beam

On my path, to make darkness more dark, dear;  
And now that all dreaming is done,  
With me stays its memory for ever;  
It was not your love that I won,

But hers whom I met long ago, dear,  
In the far-past days of my youth,  
When I wandered for ever in dreamland,  
And trusted in honour and truth.

I shall never meet more in this world, dear;  
My dream-love you slew long ago,  
When you shattered the vision one spring-tide:  
She is buried beneath the snow.

If a day it should ever dawn, dear,  
In that land where all care is past,  
And we stand face to face in the future,  
As once we stood in the past,

It will not be you I shall greet, dear,  
But my dream that I loved long ago:  
She will rise from the grave where I laid her,  
No matter how deep the snow

'Mid which I laid her to rest, dear,  
For in heaven 'twill all be past,  
And my dream, with her face like yours, dear,  
I shall know her, and find her at last.

FLORENCE PEACOCK.

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